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c. 1968/01/22

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June 26, 1967 - LBJ/Maurer discussion See memcon. Maurer said GOR had a "special interest in settling the Vietnamese problem". (p.2) The President told Maurer we would pull out our troops as soon as NVN does (p. 5) and what we wanted to protect was the right of the SVN people to choose their own leaders freely, whether we like them or not (p.6).

Sept 29-Oct 1 - Maurer in Hanoi. Maurer stopped in Moscow to see Kosygin en route and other Soviet officials on return trip. He also stopped in Peking before and after (Oct 1) Hanoi and saw Chou en Lai both times. (Bucharest 566). There were 7 days of discussions in Peking. (Harriman/Maurer 11/28 memcon; p. 4).

October 25 - Maurer debriefed to Ambassador Davis on his trip to Hanoi (Bucharest 604).

November 28 - Harriman/Maurer discussion in Bucharest. See memcon. See also Bucharest 803. Maurer urged Dong, and Dong agreed, that the DRV should make a statement about entering discussions while continuing the struggle in the South as long as there is agreement about the right of the SVN people to decide their own destiny. (p. 8) Maurer was convinced by his June discussions that self-determination was the essence of USG position. (p. 5) Harriman stressed the San Antonio formula and illustrated the "no advantage" assumption with cigars (p. 17), adding that the President indicated that "the North could continue supplying its forces to the extent it does now but that it must not increase." (p. 18) Harriman expressed hope that GOR would take appropriate steps with Hanoi and Maurer indicated he would think it over (p. 27). Harriman pointed out several times that what was lacking was any "indication" (p. 15) or "impression" or "message" (p. 16) that Hanoi wanted serious negotiation.

(hereinafter M and I)

December 12 - Macovescu and Iliescu left Bucharest. Harriman/
Macovescu 1/5 memcon, p. 1

December 14-18- M and I arrived Hanoi (a few hours after US strike

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on Doumer Bridge, which was restruct Dec 17)

M and I dined on Friday evening 12/15 with ForMin Trinh and met with Trinh again on the morning of December 16. On Sunday afternoon M met with Pham van Dong. The DRV Politburo met Dec 18 (a.m.). M and I met with Trinh December 18 (p.m.), who spoke from written text. The Rumanians left Hanoi at 9:00 p.m. on 12/18. (1/5, pp 3, 6, 7, 10)

US Views

M and I presented USG view as expressed by Harriman: the US is ready to cease bombing (1) if within a reasonable period of time the DRV would come to serious and productive discussions/negotiations, and (2) if no advantage were taken of the bombing halt (1/5, pp 4-5) The DRV should make a "gesture" or "sign" publicly or privately that Hanoi wanted negotiations. (1/5, pp. 5, 6, 25) M and I repeatedly stressed the US goal of self determination for SVN (1/5, p. 24)

DRV Views

The DRV authorized the Rumanians to present ^{to} the US the following views of the DRV (1/5, p. 18). Unless otherwise indicated quoted portions are from DRV text or French translations (DRV and GOR) thereof.

- (a) Bombing Cessation - "If the USG really wants discussions with the GDRV it should first unconditionally cease bombing and any other act of war against the DRV". (1/5, p. 13). Publicly DRV may mention "final" cessation but foregoing is actual DRV position (1/5, 13, 14). There can be no contacts as long as acts of war continue. (1/5, p. 17)
cf:
"As long as US threatens us with escalation, under these conditions our representatives cannot receive them and they have instructions to this end". (1/6, p. 13)
- (b) Timing of Talks: "At the end of an appropriate period of time after unconditional bombing cessation" (p. 13, 1/5) Orally, the DRV rep said talks following cessation could begin after "the appropriate and necessary period of time" (1/5, p. 18) The same interval applies to first talks and first contacts

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cf:

Trinh told M and I that "as soon as bombing and other acts of aggression against NVN cease, we are prepared to receive (US diplomatic contacts)" (1/5, p.17) (1/6, p. 12)

M said that an appropriate lapse could be a period sufficient for them to get assurance of the sincerity of your intentions (1/6, p. 19)

(c) Nature of Talks - "We are not against discussions but any discussions should take place according to principle. As soon as discussion engaged in, our attitude will be serious and responsible but it depends on attitude of US whether such discussions are fruitful". (1/5, p. 13) "After other DRV conditions met, the DRV will enter into serious discussions with the USG"

(d) Agenda: "The basis for settlement of the Vietnamese issue is provided by the four points of April 8, 1965; the Ministry of For Affairs subsequently issued its January 28, 1967 statement. This is our position of principles on which no concession is possible" (1/5, pp. 9, 12) Dong and Trinh said the four points contained the basis for discussions from their point of view, but they expect the US side to come with its own point of view and proposals. Macovesu said "They (DRV) will come with their claims but would have to negotiate on what the US puts forth. They said this specifically." (1/5, p. 16) "(Hanoi) was willing to discuss whatever the other side came with" (1/6, p.10) The NLF points would also be discussed at negotiations (1/5, p. 19)

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M said after cessation the way in which future procedures are directed towards starting "conversations proper" will depend on your discussions through a third party. (1/6, p. 12) M also said after cessation a modality can be found to establish precisely at which point the confidential character ceases its validity (1/6, p. 13) M deduced that after cessations US/DRV reps will meet to see to the preparation of actual negotiations (1/6, p. 9)

- (e) Modalities: Following cessation "We (DRV) are prepared to receive anybody, even a representative of the US who would be willing to let us know the American point of view and get informed of our point of view. We should consider these contacts as normal diplomatic activities. The American representative will be received by our diplomats at their suggestion ... in Hanoi or in another place." The GOR view is that if the US aid DRV establish first contacts in Paris or Bucharest, these conversations will bear on modalities of starting negotiations (1/5, p. 19. Hanoi favors private over publicly known discussions (1/6, p. 11)
- (f) Military Advantages during Talks: US views constitute a condition and cannot be discussed, but M made US views clear about no increase of men or supplies during talks (1/5, pp. 21-22) GOR favors discussion at first contact (1/5, p. 22)
- (g) MISC: Dong described the military situation as an impasse (1/5, p. 11); "conditions are not ripe for peaceful settlement because US is unwilling to do so" (1/5, p. 12)
- GOR believes desire of DRV for negotiations is

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December 14-18- Ceaucescu and Maurer visited Moscow while Macovesu was in Hanoi and informed Soviets of Harriman talks and Macovesu mission (1/5, p. 2)
The Soviets wished success to the mission (1/6, p.20)

December 19 - Macovesu and Iliescu visit Peking and see Dep For Min Gua. (1/5, p. 14) Gua said "it is the Vietnamese people who will have to decide". (1/5, p. 26)

December - Few hour stop in Moscow. Soviets not informed of substance of talks in Hanoi as of Jan 4. (1/5, p. 26)

December 24 - Macovesu and Iliescu return to Bucharest (1/5, p. 1)

December 26 - Ambassador Bogdan advised Harriman that Ceaucesu and Maurer have a message and want to send an emissary to the U.S., and Harriman advised Bogdan

he would be glad to receive the envoy. (12/26 Harriman/Bogdan memcon)

December 29 - Trinh statement of DRV position made at Mongolian reception, broadcast by Hanoi VNA in English on January 1:

"The stand of the Vietnamese people is quite clear. That is the four-point stand of the DRV Government and the political program of NFLSV. That is the basis for the settlement of the Vietnam question.

"The U.S. Government has unceasingly claimed that it wants to talk with Hanoi but has received no response. If the U.S. Government truly wants to talk, it must, as was made clear in our statement on 28 January 1967, first of all stop unconditionally the bombing and all other acts of war against the DRV. After the United States has ended unconditionally the bombing and all other acts of war against the DRV, the DRV will hold talks with the United States on questions concerned."

December 29 - Ambassador Bogdan informed Harriman that Macovesu would be the Special Envoy. (12/29 memcon)

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Jan 3, 1968 - USG prohibited bombing within 5 miles of center of Hanoi (JCS 6402. DTG 032158Z) until further notice (JCS 6700 DTG 062148Z).

Jan 4 - George Macovescu, first deputy foreign minister and Special Envoy of President Ceaucescu; Morin Iliescu, first secretary of Embassy, and Sergiu Celoc, third secretary of Embassy and interpreter, arrived in New York and proceeded to Washington.

Jan 5 - Harriman/Macovescu discussions and lunch 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. See Memcon - DRV views presented above. GOR views identified as such appear following 1/8 item below.

Jan 6 - Rusk/Macovescu discussion 11:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m. See memcon DRV views above. GOR views below.

January 8 - Harriman Bundy/Macovescu luncheon discussion 1-3 p.m. DRV views above. GOR views below.

Misc Rumanian Government views:

(a) Peace Pressures: "On both sides there will be pressures brought to bear for peace once the talks begin" (1/5, p. 22) "Strong moral and political, friendly pressure will be brought to bear (following cessation) to get discussions going as quickly as possible". (1/6, p. 19)

(b) Fighting in South: "Fighting in South should continue until final political settlement (1/5, p. 29)

Jan 11, 1968 - Secretary Rusk and Governor Harriman met with Messrs Macovesu, Iliescu and Bodgan from 12:45 p.m.-1:15 p.m., and the Secretary gave Macovesu two papers containing the 7 written parts and 4 oral points set forth below. At 5:15-7:15 p.m. Governor Harriman and Mr. Bundy met with the Romanians to explain further our drafts and to give them our French translation of our written points. Harriman told Macovesu we left it up to the latter's judgment as to what part and how to convey our points in Hanoi (5:15, p.15)

U.S. Written Points

1. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam has communicated to the United States Government this statement of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam position:

"If the United States Government really wants discussions with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam it should first unconditionally cease bombing and any other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. After the unconditional cessation of all bombing and of any other United States act of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and at the end of an appropriate period of time the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam will enter into serious discussions with the United States Government."

The United States Government welcomes this statement.

2. We understand that Foreign Minister Trinh has stated that "as soon as" all bombing ceases, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam "shall be prepared to receive" a United States representative. The United States Government will be prepared to have its representative have contacts with a representative of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as soon as all bombing ceases. (The United States Government believes that the first contacts should take place almost immediately, perhaps one or two days, after the cessation of bombing.) The purpose of these contacts, which might be in Vientiane, Rangoon,

Bucharest, or some other suitable third-country location, would be to fix the time and place of the serious discussions referred to by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Arrangement of the necessary modalities for the serious discussions should take no more than a few days.

3. The United States Government takes note of the fact that a cessation of aerial and naval bombardment is easily verifiable. In fact, the act of cessation would be observed immediately internationally and become a matter of public knowledge and speculation. In these circumstances, the United States Government believes that the "serious discussions" referred to by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam should commence immediately on the conclusion of the arrangements through the contacts.

4. Obviously it will be important at an appropriate time, in connection with the serious discussions, to accommodate the interests of all parties directly concerned with the peace of Southeast Asia. One such means is that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States Government might suggest to the two co-chairmen, and possibly to the three International Control Commission members, that they be available at the site chosen for the serious discussions in order to talk to all parties interested in the peace of Southeast Asia. This procedure could avoid the problems of a formal conference.

5. The United States Government understands through representatives of the Romanian Government that the serious discussions contemplated by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam would be without limitation as to the matters to be raised by either side. The attitude of the United States Government toward peace in Southeast Asia continues to be reflected in the 14 points and in the Manila Communique.

6. The United States Government draws attention to the statement of President Johnson in San Antonio on September 29 in which he said:

"The United States is willing to stop all aerial and naval bombardment of North Viet-Nam when this will lead promptly to productive discussions. We, of course, assume that while discussions proceed, North Viet-Nam would not take advantage of the bombing cessation or limitation."

The aide memoire handed to the Romanian Government in November, 1967, which we understand was communicated to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in mid-December, explained this statement in the following language:

"The President, in making his assumption that the North Vietnamese would not take advantage of the bombing cessation or limitation while discussions proceed, was not assuming North Viet-Nam would cut off entirely its support of its forces in the South while the armed struggle was continuing; at the same time the United States Government would feel if North Vietnam sought to take advantage of the bombing cessation or limitation to increase its support of its forces in the South, to attack our forces from north of the Demilitarized Zone or to mount large-scale visible resupply efforts, now impossible, it would not be acting in good faith."

The United States Government wishes to confirm to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that this statement remains the position of the United States Government.

7. The United States Government would inform the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in advance of the exact date of the cessation of aerial and naval bombardment in order to enable the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to have its representative prepared to meet the representative of the United States Government.

U.S. ORAL POINTS

(a) The Romanian representative should be thanked for his efforts and told that we are confident that he has fully and faithfully reported the positions of both sides in these matters. We are grateful for this action and have confidence that he will continue to do so.

(b) He should understand that the first sentence of paragraph 4 in the written message is intended to refer to the importance of the South Vietnamese Government and other interested parties being present at the site of the discussions in order to play an appropriate role.

(c) The United States Government wishes to avoid any misunderstanding also with respect to any allegations which may be made concerning specific military actions by the United States Government against the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam prior to cessation. In deference to the serious intent and sincere objectives of the mission of the Romanian Government, the United States Government will refrain for a limited period of time from bombing within five miles of the center of Hanoi or of Haiphong. This information is for the Romanian Government only. The United States Government states this as a fact and not as a commitment as to the future, but the United States Government would not wish the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam to be informed of this fact for fear that, as in the past, it could be misinterpreted by them.

(d) The United States Government awaits with interest the report of the Romanians, after consulting Hanoi, on the foregoing written and oral points.

During the course of the January 11, 12:15 and 5:15 discussions, clarification of the USG position was given as indicated under the several headings below

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(1) US Cessation

we

- (a) Harriman stated that/"pointed out" or "took note" that cessation would be public knowledge, but said we hadn't thought about a public announcement and opined that we would simply stop. (5:15, p 3)
- (b) Bundy stated personally that we would probably confirm an answer to questions that cessation was a high-level decision without amplification, and Harriman agreed, adding that we would not mention a time limit or condition it (5:15, p 4)

(2) First Contacts

- (a) Timing - Harriman said "should take place" is merely our interpretation of "as soon as" and not an ultimatum ("Des que" was actual French preposition used by DRV) WAH underscored verb "believes" as opposed to "insists" in same sentence (5:15, p 2) "one" two days after cessation" (5:15, p 10)

"The maximum GOR can get us is that they will meet us in 2 or 5 days "after cessation" - the more you can get of this the better but..... we are not asking for those precise answers." (5:15, p 14)

- (b) Duration - Harriman noted US opinion/modalities that to be agreed on in contacts should not drag on more than a few days, but invited DRV's different opinion on duration (5:15, p 3)

(3) "Serious Discussions" (Para 4)

- (a) Rusk noted it will be difficult to conduct them secretly, and if they are public many governments and parties will feel entitled to participate. "We could lose months". Accordingly we suggest "one such means" in the Para 4 that the Co-Chairman and 3 ICC

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members send representatives to the location and "any one else" could be there to discuss with the 2 or the 5 or with each other. Peking could be present. This procedure could avoid the problem of a formal conference. We don't anticipate a big meeting with 8, 12 or 15 present but the 2 or 5 could put their heads together on the possibility of agreement. (12:45, pp 3-4)

(b) Harriman assumed that "all parties directly concerned with peace in SEA" would include any 'socialist' state aiding DRV and SVN and the TCC's on our side. He noted, since the DRV third point covered internal SVN affairs; that the "US won't talk about anything specifically in SVN without a GVN rep being present." GVN should have an opportunity to come into talks "at an early point" (5:15, pp 4-5) "We don't want to exclude anyone who has a legitimate right to be present at an appropriate time." (5:15, p 6) Our para four proposal is "complicated" and "quite open to their suggestions (5:15, p 16)

(c) NLF - Harriman noted validity of our 13th point that the VC "would have no difficulty being represented and having their views presented."

(d) Open Agenda - Bundy said "we would take very seriously" DRV confirmation of the wide open agenda of "serious discussions" (5:15, pp 10-11) Bundy and Harriman confirmed our view that both sides could discuss their bases for peace; ours would be reflected in the 14 pts and Paras 25-29 of the Manila communique (5:15, p 12-13). We feel both sides should be prepared to negotiate (5:15, p 14)

(4) Bilateral US/DRV Discussions

(a) Rusk noted that at the location of the Co-Chairman and/or ICC members meeting "any one else could ...discuss...with each other." (12:45, p 3)

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(b) Rusk said if talks became public, as he thought they would "both sides will have a serious time" holding discussions (beyond contacts) without other parties "associated". But "this does not mean there cannot still be bilaterals, but we cannot have a situation where everyone else is excluded." If Hanoi makes that suggestion "we will look at it but it will be difficult" (12:45, p 5)

(c) Harriman: "There are many things that we can talk to NVN about that relate to us and NVN" (5:15, p 5).

(5) "No advantage"

(a) Macovescu said the spirit of our November "promemoria" had been given to Hanoi and he would repeat it there." (5:15, p 7).

(b) Harriman said the President used the "no advantage" assumption to inform Hanoi what he would be assuming if he stopped bombing. The US does not ask advance DRV agreement. (5:15, p 8)

(c) Harriman said we could negotiate under better conditions if the level of hostilities were reduced. The DMZ would be the easiest place to deescalate. The GOR may have other suggestions. (5:15, p 20)

(d) Amb. Bodgan said the Romanians understood "no advantage" is "not a condition but a warning," and Harriman said the US was not requiring Hanoi to agree to any conditions in advance (1/18 memo, p 2).

(6) Miscellaneous

- (a) The GOR intends first to inform Hanoi, and then if they approve, to convey the gist of the discussions with us to Moscow and Peking. We would be happy to have the Soviets informed. (5:15, pp 16, 20)
- (b) Macovescu said he left Washington, as he had left Hanoi, with the feeling that "this is a new step towards a peaceful settlement." (5:15, p. 19)

Jan 12, 1968 - Bunker given summary of PACKERS developments (State 98130)

January 15 - President Johnson's letter of appreciation to Ceausescu for GOR peace efforts (State 98490) delivered to Macovescu in Bucharest by US Charge Neubert (Bucharest 970)

January 18 - Macovescu, Iliescu and Celac left Bucharest for Hanoi via Moscow and Peking (Harriman/Bogdan 1/18 memcon)

January 18 - Harriman informed Amb Bogdan that the President's 1/17 State of the Union remarks "confirmed the San Antonio formula". "The US has not changed its position." (Harriman/Bogdan 1/18 memcon)

January 20 - Bunker gave Thieu a general fill-in of US probes of Trinh formulation without revealing PACKERS channel (Saigon 16501), in accordance with Bunker's request (Saigon 16081) and cable of instruction (State 99643).

January 22 - Macovescu arrived in Hanoi.